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the absence of carnivorous mammalia, and hence the increase of rabbits, kangaroos, etc., has little natural check excepting that of deficient food-supply. In the United States the case is far different. Here the opossum, raccoon, several species of weasels, foxes, and cats furnish an effective restriction to the increase of any form of animal life sufficiently large to attract their attention. If the keepers will permit the presence of these carnivora in the preserves there need be no fear of excessive increase of the rabbits, and quite a zoological garden might in this way be maintained.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Vines's Physiology of Plants.[1]—This important work has been before the scientific public for somewhat more than half a year, and has in that time received the critical attention of most of the vegetable physiologists. It has already taken its place as an admirable cyclopædia of vegetable physiology, from which the botanical lecturer can draw *ad libitum* in the preparation of his notes. This use of the book is much favored by its form, the various topics being treated in twenty-three "Lectures." With the exception of the tables, which in some parts of the book are pretty freely used, there is little in it to remind one of the usual text-book. The style is eminently that of the lecturer before an audience, and, while it is pleasant to read, one cannot help thinking that it might have all been given in the book in much less space. There is a notable absence of any indication of the scale upon which the figures are drawn in the illustrations, an oversight which we attribute to the emphasis of the "lecture" idea in the book.

The general sequence of subjects may be understood from the headings of the successive chapters, as follows: the structure and properties of the plant-cell; absorption, the movement of water in plants; transpiration, the food of plants; metabolism, growth, irritability, reproduction. In some cases several chapters or lectures are given to each topic; thus "irritability" is discussed in seven lectures, covering 226 pages, or very nearly one-third of the book.

In a work of this kind one may demand exactness of statement and a freedom from contradictions. It is puzzling to the reader to be told on page 22, that "in some cases it is evident that the incrustation (on the surface of plants) has been formed by the evaporation of water holding the salt in solution, which had been excreted by the plant;" while on page 60 it is said that "there is no evidence to prove that a plant loses any of its mineral substances which it absorbs." In the table on page 106 the relative numbers of stomata upon the two surfaces of the leaf of the Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) are given as 100 for the upper, 150 for the lower surface, an error which is the more notable from the fact that the figures in the following column ("relative quantity of water transpired") lose their significance when brought into relation with the proper numbers (0 for the upper, 330 per square mm. of the lower surface).

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[1] Lectures on the Physiology of Plants. By Sidney Howard Vines, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., Fellow and Lecturer of Christ's College, Cambridge, and Reader in Botany in the University. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1886, pp. x., 710. With 76 figures in the text.

On page 599 we notice with pain the careless use of the word "bud," in speaking of the soredia of lichens. The use of words in this loose way in a scientific work can be productive of bad results only. A bud is one thing, a soredium is an entirely different thing. On pp. 602 and 603 we find another batch of loose statements, from the description of the mode of spore-formation in Bacillus to the remark that "the teleutospores of these fungi [Uredineæ] are those which are formed in the autumn, at the close of the growing season."

In spite of these blemishes and imperfections, the book is one calculated to do much to elevate the botanical work of the schools and colleges, and we trust that in this country its spirit and influence may be abundantly felt.—*Charles E. Bessey.*

GENERAL NOTES.

GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

A Landslide at Brantford, Ontario, illustrating the Effects of Thrusts upon Yielding Strata.—A landslide along the right bluff of the Grand River, about two miles southeast of Brantford, Ontario, which occurred at 6.45 P.M. of April 15, 1884, is worthy of notice as giving not only one of the best known illustrations of the structure of the Erie Clay of Ontario, but as showing the physical effects upon a smaller scale of lateral thrusts upon yielding strata.

At the point where the slide occurred the valley is about two miles wide, although some distance above and below it is much narrower. The sides of the valley rise about ninety feet above the flood plain, which is ten feet above the usual surface of the river. The upper twenty feet are composed of sandy Saugeen Clay (of Canadian geologists), in very thin regular beds, whilst the lower portion of the cliffs and that below the modern alluvium